A VINDICATION OF THE MINISTERS of the GOSPEL

In, and about *London*, from the unjust Aspersions cast upon their former Actings for the Parliament, as if they had promoted the bringing of the

KING

to Capitall punishment.

WITH

A short Exhortation to their People to keep close to their Covenant-Ingagement.

Isaiah 62.1. *For Zions sake I will not hold my peace, and for Ierusalems sake I will not rest, until the righteousnes thereof go forth as brightnes, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.*

Prov. 24.21,22. *My son, fear thou the LORD and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change.*

For their calamity shall rise suddenly, and who knoweth the ruine of them both?

Printed at *London*, and Re-printed at *Edinburgh* by *Evan Tyler*, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie, 1648.

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A Vindication of the Ministers of the Gospel in and about *London*, from the unjust aspersions cast upon their former Actings for the Parliament, as if they had promoted the bringing of the KING to Capitall punishment.

IT cannot be unknown how much we, and other Ministers of this City and Kingdom that faithfully adhered to the Parliament, have injuriously smarted under the scourge of evil tongues and pens, ever since the first eruption of the unhappy differences and unnaturall War between the King and Parliament, for our obedience to the Commands and Orders of the Honourable Houses, in their contests with his Majesty, and conflicts with his Armies.

We are not ignorant of the over-busie intermedlings of Prelates and their party heretofore, in over-ruling Civill affairs to the great endangering of Kingdoms, and of this in particular, when private interests, ambitious designes, revenge, or other sinister ends, engaged them beyond their sphere. Howbeit, it cannot reasonably (as we conceive) be denied, that Ministers, as *subjects*, being bound to obey the Laws, and to preserve the Liberties of the Kingdom, and having an interest in them and the happiness of them, as well as others, may and ought, (without incurring the just censure due to busie-bodies and incendiaries) to appear, for preserving the Laws and Liberties of that Common-wealth whereof they are members, especially in our case, when it was declared by the Parliament, that all was at stake, and in danger to be lost? No, nor as *Ministers*, ought they to hold their peace, in a time wherein the sins of Rulers and Magistrates as well as others, have so far provoked God, as to kindle the fire of his wrath against his People. And yet, for this alone, the faithfull Servants of God, have in all ages, through the malice of Satan and his instruments been traduced as Arch-incendiaries, when only their accusers are indeed guilty of both laying the train, and of putting fire to it, to blow up a Kingdom.

And *Ahab* and his sycophants think none so fit to bear the odium of being the grand *Troubler of Israel*, as *Elijah*. Thus the Popish device was to charge the *Gun-powder Treason* (had it taken effect) upon the Puritans: And, if you beleeve *Tertullus*, even a *Paul* is a *pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition throughout the world*, a *ringleader* of a *sect*, and what not, but what he is? Yea, *Christ* himself (though a friend to *Monarchy*, even of heathenish *Rome*) is proclaimed *an enemy to Cæsar*, to open a way to his destruction, by their malice, who never cared for the interest of *Cæsar*.

Wherefore, although *with us*, who have had experience of like usage, *it be a small thing to be* thus *judged of men*, when we regard only our own particular persons; For, *if they call the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his houshold?* yet when we consider how much it concerns the honour of our Master, and the good of all, to preserve our ministeriall function immaculate (our good names, being in that relation, as needfull to others, as a good conscience to our selves) we dare not but stand by and assert the integrity of our hearts, and the innocency of all our actings (in reference to the King and Kingdom) for which we are so much calumniated and traduced.

This we are compelled to at this time, because there are many who very confidently (yet most unjustly) charge us to have been formerly instrumental, toward the taking away the life of the King. And because also there are others who in their scurrilous Pasquils and Libels (as well as with their virulent tongues) present us to the world as a *bloody seditious sect, and traiterous obstructors, of what all the godly people of the Kingdom do earnestly desire for establishing of Religion and Peace*, in that we stick at the *Execution* of the King, while yet we are (as they falsly affirm) content to have him *Condemned* and *Condemned*: all which we most, and do from our hearts disclaim, before the whole world.

For when we did first engage with the Parliament, (which we did not till called thereunto) we did it with loyall hearts and affection towards the King, and his posterity. Not intending the least hurt to his Person, but to stop his party from doing further hurt to the Kingdom; not to bring his Majesty to justice (as some now speak) but to put him into a better capacity to do justice; *To remove the wicked from before him, that his throne might be established in righteousnesse*; not to dethrone, and destroy him, which (we much fear) is the ready way to the destruction of all his Kingdoms.

That which put on my of us at first to appear for the Parl. was, *The Prepo-*

Propositions and Orders of the Lords and Commons in Parliament (June 10. 1642.) for bringing in of money and plate, &c. wherein they assured us that whatsoever should be brought in thereupon, should not be at all imployed upon any other occasion, then to maintain, *The Protestant Religion, The Kings Authority, his Person in his royall dignity, the free course of justice, the Laws of the Land, the Peace of the Kingdom, and the Priviledges of Parliament, against any force which shall oppose them.*

And in this we were daily confirmed and encouraged more and more, by their many subsequent Declarations and Protestations, which we held our selves bound to believe, knowing many of them to be godly and conscientious men, of publick spirits, zealously promoting the common good, and labouring to free this Kingdom from tyranny and slavery, which some evil instruments about the King endeavoured to bring upon the Nation.

As for the present actings at *Westminster*, since the time that so many of the Members were by force secluded, divers imprisoned, and others thereupon withdrew from the House of Commons (and, there not being that conjunction of the two Houses, as heretofore) we are wholly unsatisfied therein, because we conceive them to be so far from being warranted by sufficient Authority, as that in our apprehensions they tend to an actual alteration (if not subversion) of that which the Honourable *House of Commons*, in their *Declaration* of *April* 17. 1646. have taught us to call *the Fundamentall constitution and government of this Kingdom*, which they therein assure us (if we understand them) they would never alter.

Yea, we hold our selves bound in duty to God, Religion, the King, Parliament and Kingdom, to profess before God, Angels and men, That we verily believe that which is so much feared to be now in agitation, *the taking away the life of the King*, in the present way of Trial, is not only not agreeable to any Word of God, the principles of the Protestant Religion (never yet stained with the least drop of blood of a King) or the fundamentall constitution and government of this Kingdom; but, contrary to them also to the *Oath of Allegiance*, the *Protestation* of *May* 5. 1641. and the *Solemn League and Covenant* from all, or any of which Engagements, we know not any power on earth, able to absolve us or others.

In which full, we have sworn (with hands lifted up to the most high God) *That we shall with sincerity, reality, and constancy, in our several vocation, endeavour, without respect of persons, mutually to preserve*

the Rights and Priviledges of the Parliament, and the Liberties of the Kingdoms, and to preserve and defend the Kings Majesties Person, and Authority, in the defence of the true Religion, and Liberties of the Kingdoms: That the world may bear Witnesse with our consciences of our Loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish his Majesties just power and greatnesse.

And we are yet further tied by another Article of the same Covenant; *Not to suffer our selves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, perswasion or terrour, to be divided or withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary party, or to give our selves to a detestable indifferency, or neutrality in this Cause which so much concerns the glory of God, the good of the Kingdoms, and honour of the King: but shall all the dayes of our lives, zealously and constantly continue therein against all opposition, and promote the same according to our power against all lets and impediments whatsoever.* And this we have not only taken our selves, but most of us have by command of the Parliament administred it to others, whom we have thereby drawn in to be as deep as our selves in this publike Engagement.

Therefore, According to that our Covenant, we do in the Name of the great God (to whom all must give a strict account) warn and exhort all who either more immediately belong to our respective charges, or any way depend on our Ministry, or to whom we have administred the said Covenant (that we may not by our silence suffer them to run upon that highly provoking sin of Perjury) to keep close to the wayes of God, and the rules of Religion, the Laws, and their Vows, in their constant maintaining the true Reformed Religion, the fundamentall Constitution, and Government of this Kingdom, (not suffering themselves to be seduced from it, by being drawn in to subscribe the late Models, or *Agreement of the People**, which directly tends to the utter subversion of the whole frame of the fundamentall government of the Land, and makes way for an universall toleration of all heresies and blasphemies (directly contrary to our Covenant) if they can but get their Abettors to cover them under a false guise, *of the Christian Religion,*) as also in preserving the Priviledges of both Houses of Parliament, and the Union between the two Nations of *England* and *Scotland*: to mourn bitterly for their own Sins, the Sins of the City, Army, Parliament and Kingdom, and the wofull miscarriages of the King himself, (which we cannot but acknowledge to be many and very great) in his Government, that have cost the three Kingdoms so dear, and cast Him down from his Excellency into an horrid pit of misery, almost beyond example.

And

* Declared by both *Houses* (for the substance of it) to be *Destructive to the being of Parliaments, and to the fundamental Government of the Kingdom, Dece.* 1647 yea, condemned heretofore by the *General*, and his *councel* of Warre, and one of the souldiers shot to death for promoting it.

And to pray that God would both give Him effectuall repentance, and ſanctifie that bitter cup of Divine Diſpleaſure, that the Divine providence hath put into His hand; as alſo that God would reſtrain the violence of men, that they may not dare to draw upon themſelves and the Kingdom the blood of their SOVERAIGN.

And now, we have good reaſon to expect that they who brought us under ſuch a bond, and thereby led us into the neceſsity of this preſent Vindication and manifeſtation of our judgements and diſcharge of our conſciences, ſhould defend us in it. However, we reſolve rather to be of their number that tremble at his *Terrours* who is a *conſuming fire*, and will not fail *to avenge the quarrell of His Covenant* upon all that contemn it, then to be found among thoſe who *deſpice the Oath by breaking His Covenant* (*after Riſing up the hand*) although it had been made but in Civil things only, and that with the worſt of men. Lev. 26. Ezek. 17. 2 Sam. 21.

C. Burges, D. D. Preacher of the Word in Pauls London.
George Gouge D. D. Paſtor of Black friers.
Edm. Stanton D. D. Paſtor of Kingſton.
Tho. Temple D. D. Paſtor of Batterſey.
George Walker, Paſtor of John Evangeliſt.
Edm. Calamy Paſtor of Aldermanbury.
Jer. Whitaker Paſtor of Mag: Bermondſey.
Dan. Cudrick Miniſter of Martins in the Fields.
William Spurſtow Miniſter of Hackney.
La. Seaman Paſtor of Alhollows Bredſtreet.
Simeon Aſh Miniſter of Michael Baſingſhaw.
Thomas Caſe, Miniſter of Maudlin Milk-ſtreet.
Nicholas Proſet, Miniſter of the Word at Foſters.
Tho. Thorowgood Miniſter at Foſters.
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Arthur Jackſon, Paſtor of Michael Woodſtreet.
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Thomas Cawton, Paſter of Bartholomew Exchange.
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Samuel Clark, Miniſter of Bennet Fynk.
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Francis Roberts, Paſtor of Auſtins.

Matthew Hayland, Minister of Trinity Parish.
John Sheffield, Minister of Swithins.
William Harrison, Minister of Grace-Church.
William Jenkin, Pastor of Christ-Church.
John Viner Pastor of Buttolph Algate.
Elidad Blackwell, Pastor of Allhallows Vndershaft.
John Crosse Minister at Matthews Fridaystreet.
John Fuller, Minister of Buttolphs Bishopsgate.
William Taylor, Pastor of Stephens Colemanstreet.
Peter Whitham Pastors of Albans Woodstreet.
Francis Peck, Pastor of Nicholas Acorn.
Christopher Love, Pastor of Anne Aldersgate.
John Wallis, Minister of Martins Iron-monger-lane.
Tho: Watson, Pastor of Stevens Walbrook.
William Wickins, Pastor of Andrew Hubbard.
Thomas Manton, Minister of Stoke Newington.
Tho: Gouge, Minister of Sepulchres.
William Blackmore, Pastor of Peters Cornhill.
Robert Mercer, Minister of Brides.
Ralph Robinson, Pastor of Mary Woolnoth.
John Glasscock, Minister of the Gospel at Andrew Vndershaft.
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Ionathan Lloyd, Pastor of James Garlickhithe.
John Wells, Minister of Olaves Jury.
Ben: Needler, Pastor of Margaret Moses.
Nathaniel Staniforth, Minister of Mary Bothaw.
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Josias Bull Pastor of North Gray.
Jonathan Deverux late Minister at Andrews Holburn.
Paul Russell Preacher at Hackney.
Ioshuah Kirby, Minister of the Word.
Arthur Barham, Pastor of Helens.

FINIS.